



## COLSTERWORTH AND DISTRICT PARISH COUNCIL

### Colsterworth and District Parish Council (CAD) MARKING THE DEATH OF A SENIOR NATIONAL FIGURE PROTOCOL

This protocol offers guidance to the elected Members, staff and population within the Parish covered by Colsterworth and District Parish Council (CADPC) on marking the death of a senior national figure. It sets out the protocols to be observed on the death of the Sovereign, which involves the greatest number of ceremonial elements.

This document is derived from the template supplied by the National Association of Civic Officers (NACO) and is the adopted template of interpretation and implementation within the Colsterworth and District Parish Council (CADPC).

This protocol is constructed in a way to enable appropriate elements when marking the death of other members of the Royal Family, the Prime Minister/former Prime Minister, a serving Member of Parliament (Grantham and Stamford Constituency). or other prominent person.

All parts of this protocol apply on the death of the Sovereign (note: those sections around the Proclamation arise only upon the Monarch's death).

#### 1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 This protocol sets out the action to be taken in the event of the death of the following persons:

- a. HRH The King
- b. HRH The Queen Consort
- c. HRH The Prince of Wales
- d. HRH The Princess of Wales
- e. HRH Prince George of Wales
- f. HRH Princess Charlotte of Wales
- g. HRH Prince Louis of Wales
- h. HRH The Duke of Sussex
- i. HRH The Duchess of Sussex
- j. HRH The Duke of York
- k. HRH The Princess Royal
- l. HRH The Earl of Wessex
- m. HRH The Countess of Wessex
- n. The Prime Minister
- o. The Member of Parliament for South Kesteven

Plans will only be implemented following an official announcement. Upon notification of an official announcement, the Clerk will advise all members that the protocol is to be implemented.

- His Majesty The King will be given a State funeral.
- The Duke of Edinburgh and the Prince of Wales will be given a Ceremonial Royal Funeral
- The Queen Consort, The Prince of Wales, The Princess of Wales, Prince George of Wales, Princess Charlotte of Wales, Prince Louis of Wales, The Duke of Sussex, The Duchess of Sussex, The Duke of York, The Earl of Wessex, The Princess Royal, The Countess of Wessex, The Duke of Gloucester, The Duchess of Gloucester, The Duke of Kent, Prince Michael Kent, Princess Michael of Kent and Princess Alexandra will be given Non Ceremonial Royal Funerals.

**Flying of flags at half-mast across the Parishes will be appropriate.**

The High Sheriff of Lincoln has responsibility for the primary reading of the Proclamation (produced/circulated by Buckingham Palace/Central Government) within the county of Lincolnshire. Elements of this protocol may be used when responding to another incident which has led to a large number of deaths (i.e. a local disaster or terrorist attack).

**1. Implementation of the Protocol on hearing of the death**

Plans to mark a death must be implemented only when a formal announcement has been made (i.e.

where news agencies say ‘reports are coming in of the death of...’ **PLEASE TREAT WITH CAUTION.**)

Wherever possible wait for a more definite or specific announcement (i.e. ‘it has been announced by Buckingham Palace/Downing Street that...’)

For the death of the Sovereign or another senior member of the Royal Family the Clerk will cascade information through the community to ensure timely decisions and notifications can be made. For other figures, there may need to be consultation at the time on the ways in which such a death should be marked.

**2. Flag flying (see 7 below – Proclamation Day)** The Parish flags are to be flown at half-mast: Guidance on flag flying and what is meant by “half-mast”. Guidance on flag flying can be found on the website of the Flag Institute - [www.flaginstitute.org](http://www.flaginstitute.org). It is envisaged this will be carried out in conjunction with the Parish Priest and Parochial Church Council. On the formal announcement of death, all flags are to be lowered to half-mast until 08:00 hrs on the morning following the Funeral. In the case of the death of the Sovereign, the day following the death will be ‘Proclamation Day’ (the day when the new Sovereign is proclaimed). On Proclamation Day flags must flying at half-mast at the start of the day. All Flags will then be flown at the Mast-head from 11:00hrs on D+1 (Proclamation Day) to coincide with the Reading of the Principal Proclamation and until 13:00hrs. The following day (D+2, as the Proclamation firstly having been read in London on Proclamation Day) will then be read in Belfast, Edinburgh and Cardiff on the day following Proclamation Day.

**3. Book of Condolence**

On the day following the announcement of the death of the Sovereign, The Prince of Wales or the Queen Consort, a Book of Condolence will be opened at St John the Baptist Church, Gunby Church, St Peters Church Stainby and North Witham Church along with a photograph. In the event of another member of the Royal Family or notable person, the Parish Clerk in discussion with the Chair, will judge public feeling as to whether a book of condolence should be opened locally.

The Book of Condolence will close the day after the funeral and the book deposited with the Lincolnshire County Council Record Office.

#### **4. Official Correspondence/website**

The Chairman (as the figurehead of the Parish Council) will agree a form of words for a message, expressing sorrow at the news of the death, along the lines of:

“The Councillors and Clerk of Colsterworth and District Parish Council are deeply saddened at the news of the death of XXXXXXXXXX. Our thoughts are with the Royal Family at this time.”

This will be the official form of words to be used on the Parish Council's website homepage and along with details of the Church's opening hours and village Books of Condolence. The website must be replaced by a black screen with a photograph of the deceased, the year of birth and death and where, if any, members of the public can access Books of Condolence and leave flowers.

An external link to the Buckingham Palace e-book of condolence ([www.royal.gov.uk](http://www.royal.gov.uk)) will be made. This link will be removed at the end of the day following the day of the funeral (i.e. if the funeral falls on a Thursday the link will be removed at 5.00pm on the Friday).

#### **5. Organisation of Local Events During the Period of Mourning**

On the death of the Sovereign large numbers of people may wish to pay their respects and to take part in events that mark not just a sad passing, but a moment in history. The focus will inevitably fall on London, which many will perceive to be the centre of events.

Residents may choose to express their sadness by laying flowers; in order to manage such activity safely, the Council has identified the following sites within the parish:

- The War Memorial, Colsterworth.
- Gunby Church Front.
- St Peter Church front Stainby.
- North Witham Church front.
- St Mary Church, North Witham.

All flowers will be removed the week after the funeral has taken place (or once the flowers have died). Weather conditions will have an effect on the above but decisions will be made giving forethought and sensitivity to the needs of the community.

Church Services may also provide a setting for people to come together and collectively express sadness. Councillor and staff attendance at such services is encouraged to add to the sense of the community coming together in a unified expression of grief. It will be important to ensure that such services bring together other denominations and other faiths and they address the wants and needs of those within the parish having no personal beliefs to enable effective bringing together of the whole community.

These arrangements will be made by the Priest in Charge and Parochial Church Council. Councillor and staff attendance at such services is encouraged to add to the sense of community coming together in a unified expression of grief.

#### **6. Cancellation of Existing Planned Events**

It is impossible to create hard and fast rules around cancelling long planned events which fall in the period between a death and a funeral. It is best practice to remove the importance of

'cost and inconvenience' when cancelling events, remaining mindfully guided by the public mood. Public opinion can be volatile and change quickly in such emotional circumstances and there is a risk of public criticism if the decision to go ahead is seen to 'go against the grain'.

It is hard to envisage any civic event that should carry on in the period between a death and the funeral as it would risk negative publicity at a time when the rest of the country and the Commonwealth is in mourning.

When the time comes, the question to ask is not 'do we cancel?' **but 'is it really necessary and appropriate for this event to go ahead?'**

## **7. Proclamation Day**

As stated in 2 above, Proclamation Day is set to be the day following the death of the Sovereign (Day of Death plus 1).

(i) The Proclamation will be made at St. James Palace at 11.00hrs (or 14:00hrs on a Sunday)

The Proclamation is then cascaded.

(ii) At noon on Proclamation Day it will be read at the Royal Exchange in the City of London. At noon on D+2 it will be read:

(iii) In Edinburgh by Lord Lyon King of Arms at Mercat Cross and at the drawbridge to Edinburgh Castle; in Cardiff by Wales Herald Extraordinary at Cardiff Castle; in Belfast by Norroy and Ulster King of Arms.

(iv) Once those Proclamations have been read it is appropriate for the Proclamation to be read at County, City, Borough and Parish level if they so choose.

(v) The High Sheriff of Lincolnshire will cause the Proclamation to be read at County level at 12.30hrs.

The wording of the Proclamation to be read out will be easily available; the Clerk will gain access via the Buckingham Palace website ([www.royal.gov.uk](http://www.royal.gov.uk)) or the Privy Council website ([www.privacy-council.org.uk](http://www.privacy-council.org.uk)). The High Sheriff of Lincolnshire's office may also make copies of the Proclamation available.

## **8. Dress Code**

Throughout the period between and including the day of death to the day of the funeral should be black tie and / or black rosette for those who wish to wear them. Whilst flags are at half-mast it is appropriate for black ties/scarves to be worn by the Chairman, Councillors and staff when on Council business.

On occasions where a full Council meeting falls during the period of mourning or on the death of the Sovereign and when the Proclamation is read it is appropriate for all Councillors and members of staff to wear a small black rosette (self-supplied) or a black armband.

## **9. Timings**

For Royal funerals planning largely assumes that when a death occurs it will be on an ordinary day of the week and the funeral will follow a given number of days later. That is because when you start to ask 'what if?' it soon becomes almost impossible to anticipate

every conceivable set of circumstances. Easter, Christmas and Remembrance Sunday all throw up possible problems.

When reports of a death are received, it will be possible to take a view of whether it is a 'straightforward' time of the year, which gives a clear run, or whether other elements like Easter or Christmas are likely to complicate matters.

A Royal funeral will not take place on a Sunday. Should Remembrance Sunday fall between D and the day of the funeral it is likely that the National commemorations would go ahead in some form, but again the lead on local ceremonies should be taken from indications on television, and in the media of plans for the Cenotaph.

## **10. Marking a Silence**

The death of a Senior National Figure may be marked by a National Two Minute Silence.

On the death of the Sovereign there will be a Two Minute Silence at 11.00am on the day of the funeral (D+10).

It may be that Silence will be kept for other members of the Royal Family; advised for the day of the funeral as part of the funeral service.

## **11. Council Meetings**

Where a meeting of the Council takes place in a room where a picture of The King usually hangs the picture does not need to be removed. The length of time pictures should be draped in ribbons and when the picture(s) should be moved to a new position will be made by the Clerk following receipt of updates or by judging public mood/opinion but should not be a matter that needs to be rushed. It is noted that it may be many months after a death has occurred that it becomes appropriate for a picture to be moved.

## **12. Letter of Condolence**

It is usual, in the case of the death of a member of the Royal Family, for letters to be sent to the Private Secretary of the deceased, asking that condolences be passed to the next of kin and other members of the family (except in the case of the Sovereigns deaths, in which case they should be sent to the

new Sovereign's Private Secretary asking that condolences be passed on to the new Sovereign). In each case one 'official' letter of condolence will be sent on behalf of the Parish Council by the Parish Clerk.

## **13. Public Holiday**

The day of the State Funeral will be a Public Holiday, unless D10 falls on a Saturday.

## **14. The Death of the Prime Minister and Local Member of Parliament**

The Church flags across all Parishes will fly at half-mast on the day of the announcement of the death. On subsequent days the usual local arrangements will resume until the day of the funeral when the flag will again fly at half-mast.

The Chair of the Council will issue a statement via the Clerk expressing the sadness of the Council and community of Colsterworth and District at the news of the death. The statement will also appear on the home page of the website. The statement will confirm that the flags are to be flown at half-mast. The Clerk, in conjunction with the Chair of the Council, will

review the programme of engagements undertaken by the Council to ensure it is appropriate in a time of national mourning and that it sits comfortably with the national mood.

Members and Senior Officers when on official duty should wear dark coloured clothing, for the first day after the announcement, for any official minutes' silence and on the day of the funeral.

This protocol has been developed in conjunction with the Parish Priest and Colsterworth and District Parish Council.

Adopted at Colsterworth and District Parish Council Meeting:	Date:5th March 2023
Chairman:	Caroline Hainsworth
Responsible Officer/Clerk	Sue Grant
Document Control: Version	CAD.Marking.the.death.of.a.senior.national.figure.2024.03
Policy Review Date	March 2025
Adopted at Colsterworth and District Parish Council Meeting:	Date:7th March 2023
Chairman:	Caroline Hainsworth
Responsible Officer/Clerk	Sue Grant
Document Control: Version	CAD.Marking.the.death.of.a.senior.national.figure.2023.03
Policy Review Date	March 2024
Adopted at Colsterworth and District Parish Council Meeting:	Date:1st March 2022
Chairman:	Caroline Hainsworth
Responsible Officer/Clerk	Sue Grant
Document Control: Version	CAD.Marking.the.death.of.a.senior.national.figure.2020.03
Policy Review Date	March 2023
Adopted at Colsterworth and District Parish Council Meeting:	Date: 2 <sup>nd</sup> March 2021
Chairman:	Caroline Hainsworth
Responsible Officer/Clerk	Sue Grant
Document Control: Version	CAD.Marking.the.death.of.a.senior.national.figure.2020.03
Policy Review Date	March 2022